

INTEGRITY



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: the fourth issue :

January 1947

Vol. 1, No. 4

SUBJECT : MENTAL DISEASE

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Lesson from the Book of Wisdom. Blessed is the man that is found without blemish, and that hath not gone after gold, nor put his trust in money nor in treasures. Who is he, and we will praise him? For he hath done wonderful things in his life. Who hath been tried thereby, and made perfect, he shall have glory everlasting: he that could have transgressed: and hath not transgressed: and could do evil things, and hath not done them: therefore are his goods established in the Lord, and all the Church of the saints shall declare his alms.

Ecclesiasticus XXXI 8-11

Vol. 1, No. 4
January, 1947

Published Monthly by Integrity Publishing Co., 1556 York Avenue, New York 28, N. Y. Edited by Edward Willock and Carol Jackson. Entered as Second Class Matter October 14, 1946 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. Under the Act of March 3, 1879.

25 cents a copy
PL 9-8313
\$3.00 a year

EDITORIAL



f anyone were to ask what is the prevailing intellectual or spiritual influence in this country today it would be hard to answer. We are a Protestant country but Protestantism is no longer the dominant mentality. Catholics are numerous but the Catholic view of life obtains hardly anywhere. Secularism is very much with us but it is a this-world philosophy without specific content. Materialism is rife but it is more a way of life than a way of thinking.

We of *Integrity* incline to think that the most pervasive contemporary influence is Freudianism or pseudo-Freudianism. It has infiltrated into the schools. It is gaining ascendancy over the medical profession (at a time when the medical profession is tempted to coalesce into a united socialized group). It was held in high honor in the armed forces where psychiatric verdicts, though often very foolish, were never questioned. It is the rock foundation of all social work, sociology, and advanced personnel techniques. It forms the structural basis of novels and detective fiction, and has its affiliations with modern music. It has perverted the ballet and preoccupied the theatre. The movies have been lately intent on it. Even the Protestant clergy are toying with it as a vehicle for giving spiritual help.

People have been pecking at Freudianism for a long time, applauding this, deploring that. The pecking has done no good and, because it was merely pecking, much harm. It is amazing how many people, and how many Catholics, have been taken in by a psychology, and philosophy, so wildly at odds with human experience and Christian principles. But so it is.

Someone has to do more than peck, so we have undertaken a large Christian view of the field which Freudianism purports to explain. Our view is long on principles, devoid of juicy case histories. It is shamefully condensed. It is psychology which tends more toward the philosophical than the clinical.

This study pre-supposes the classical psychology as set forth by St. Thomas, but has purposely avoided technical explanations, for fear of obscuring the main issues. It deals only with functional mental disorders; not with those which have an organic base. We hope in the future to clarify and amplify some specific aspects of this complex problem.

THE EDITORS.

A CHRISTIAN ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

The Bankruptcy of Modern Psychiatry

Of all modern problems none is more serious than the alarming growth of mental disorders, slight and not so slight. Asylums are packed, psychoanalysts are doing a lucrative business, psychiatrists have taken on a new dignity, and psychology is a popular field of graduate and undergraduate study. A demented relative used to be a closet skeleton. No longer. Uncle Alexander, but yesterday carted off (by the combined force of ten strong men) to a "psychoneurotic institution" is only "sick." It's just like a cold, but a little more inconvenient. Especially for Uncle Alexander.

How we kid ourselves! It's like pretending that there is no atom bomb, or that we can get along amicably with atheistic Russia, or that there always was as much cancer as now only we didn't recognize it. And so we manage to pretend that the loss of reason, that the terrible, unbearable, mental and spiritual torture of thousands doesn't really hurt. What's worse, we try to pretend that it "just happened," and that it has nothing to do with our decline of morals, our cult of luxury, our liberal education, our disdain of discipline, and our all-pervading, wanton disregard of God.

An army of experts has arisen to deal with the situation. They are working in the dark. It is curious that we have so long tolerated their groping; that we are impressed by the curious vocabulary they have made up for themselves; that we pay such enormous sums to them and are content with so little in return. A psychiatrist enjoys the prerogatives of the undertaker: we are grateful to each for taking over an unsavory job; and we are more than willing that the details of the operation remain a mystery.

Would it be impertinent to inquire the ideal toward which psychiatry is presumably working; would it be presumptuous to demand that abnormal psychologists specify their norm? Here is the opening sentence in a current college text of abnormal psychology:

"In all of the treatises on abnormal psychology there arises the problem of determining what activities are normal and what activities are abnormal. . . The fact that no solution has been reached (on this) is due in a large measure to our lack of knowledge of the normal individual."*

It is as though a medical doctor had no idea what health was and might be misled into thinking that a dead person had recovered, merely because his convulsions had ceased.

The root of the difficulty is this matter of the norm, and the reason is that the science of psychiatry arose in the post-Christian era, after the truth about the nature and purpose of man had been lost, lost at least

* Dorcas & Shaffer. Used at Fordham.

to the fathers of that science.

Most references to "medieval" treatment of the insane in textbooks are wildly inaccurate. Snake pits were a device of the ancients; the chained inmates of Bedlam were a post-Reformation scandal; and diabolism as an all-pervasive explanation was 17th century. True history does honor to the Church. The admirable Gheel system of allowing freedom of the village to harmless lunatics was started by a cult to St. Dymphna, and still persists. Medieval references to the care of the insane were simple and salutary, including such advice as playing music to cheer the melancholy. Above all what honors the Church is that mental disease never became a major problem while the world still lived within the framework which She made.

Freud is the father of modern psychiatry. His philosophy has a pervasive influence even where his technique is rejected. Freud did not know what a man is, much less what a normal man is; or what the purpose of life is; or that God exists. His standard of a "cure" is that a neurotic patient should achieve a satisfactory sex life.

Not everyone agrees with Freud, but all take him as a standard of reference, good or bad. The reason for his influence is that he did offer some sort of comprehensive explanation of mental disease, even though the explanation is materialistic, atheistic, and sensual. The real alternative to Freud is another comprehensive explanation, not just a modification or criticism of his system. Freud is not accidentally wrong; he is essentially wrong. Accidentally and occasionally he is right. He had his insights, but his explanations were off-center.

You can't build a rival system to Freud's starting experimentally. Freud didn't build his system experimentally either. He already had a philosophy in the light of which he made up his principles.

The first work on a Christian abnormal psychology must be to build a comprehensive general explanation rooted in truths that we do certainly know. Then in the light of this, let us explain the abnormalities and work out the cures. This paper proposes a rough framework.

A world in a spiritual void,
grew madder by the day;
Along came Sigmund Freud,
And sped it on its way.



PART I. THE NORM

Ought a man to adjust himself to his environment, or conspire to make over or escape from his environment? A neurotic is usually conspicuously out of step or is he, perhaps, the only one in step? How can you know unless you have objective standards as to what constitutes a good environment. The normal man cannot be studied in isolation from his normal habitat because his mental balance is effected by his environment.

Because we live in cities which are ugly and disordered, and made by men, we lose sight of the harmony of the universe as made by God. God designed everything harmoniously. There is a rhythm in the movement of the planets, an order within atoms; there is a procession in the seasons, an ebb and flow in tides, a balance of elements in the soil and a reciprocal relationship among members of a family. There are little things and big things, and all sizes in between. There are organic things and inorganic things. There are material things and spiritual things.

Is man little or big? Neither. He is the measure of the little and the big. He is the standard of reference of maximal and minimal. Within the macrocosm which is the universe, he is a microcosm, a little universe, containing within himself all gradations of material being, while he is himself the most complex organic structure in the universe.

All other material things are made for man. He is king pin of the visible universe, even if not its absolute master. Only when men's thinking is warped do they fancy themselves inferior and subordinate to the material universe.

There is a whole invisible universe above man, in which he also shares. In relation to it he is on the bottom rung. The unique position of man in the universe is that it is he alone who bridges the material and spiritual orders, with one foot in each. He is highest in the material order by virtue of the complexity of his organism; lowest in the spiritual order because of the cumbersome way he attains knowledge, through his senses and through reason.

The world isn't just a jumble of things; it's an ordered and very intricate arrangement of things. God makes a synthesis of things. He doesn't just put them together; He also supplies a principle of operation. Not just planets but also a law of gravity, an internal tendency to operate according to a certain mode of physical attraction of forces. Not just animals, but animals with instincts which lead them to do what they are made to do. The whole universe is like that; filled with things, and the principles by which they operate. Everything operates according to reason—only it is God's reason, reflected in the thing by instinct or law.

The catch is man. He too is a synthesis, more intricate than all the

others. He, too, has a vital principle, his soul. But he has the power to understand what he ought to do and he has the free will to do it, or not to do it. This is how it comes about that man is in the moral order, and that a new law, the moral law, is operative in regard to him. Man's freedom makes it possible for him to upset, possibly destroy, the harmony of the universe.

Man may soon succeed in destroying the harmony of the physical universe, which will be the end of him and it. He has already considerably upset the balance of nature. He has created chaos in his relationships with his own kind, chaos which we know as world war. He can destroy himself and he sometimes does. When he kills his body, it is suicide. When he turns away from God, it is mortal sin. When he destroys the harmony of his own nature, it is insanity.

All things are made for man, but man is made for God. Man preserves the harmony of the universe and operates within it only so long as he himself is ordered to God and respects God's laws on the various levels. The great sin of our time is a presumptuous disregard of God's natural, moral and physical laws. We set ourselves up as gods and try to create a harmony of our own, ordered to our own pleasure. That is why, in every field, there is profound disorder.

Insofar as the harmony of the sub-human world is disturbed, it redounds on man and creates a tension in his nature too. For instance, enormous cities are a strain on most men, if only because they surround men with cement and steel, from which are remote in the scale of being, and separate them from the organic world with which they have a closer natural relationship. It is not strange that gardening, that farm animals and pets, and that all the manifold changes of the seasons, should have a soothing effect on men. These things (and not subways and skyscrapers) form their natural habitat.

However, most of the strains on human nature come from disordered human relationships. Here too, there are organic laws which must be observed. The arrangement of society is not arbitrary in its fundamentals, but only in its accidentals. One thing that *is* arbitrary is the form of government. It is silly to attach an exaggerated importance to democracy, while permitting divorce. The family is a matter of necessity; democracy is a matter of preference.

There are four elements essential to an ordered society: the family, the community, authority, a functional nature. We shall treat of each briefly, only insofar as it relates to mental disorders.

The family. The basic unit of society is the family, and not the individual, as liberal economics would have it. The practical necessity for the family is the bearing and rearing of children; but the practical necessities of nature are all reflected in the psychological make-up of

human beings. Men and women are not really whole individuals in a psychological sense, but meant to complement each other in a permanent, stable, family unit. Children need the security of parental love as much as they need the physical care of adults. These things are all pretty obvious and the greatest effort in history to dispense with the family, the Russian experiment, failed dismally. We still have the family, but I wonder if we appreciate how much we owe to it for whatever stability we do have in society.

However, our families are not healthy, and this is reflected almost immediately in mental disorders. Marriage is not stable, thanks to the possibility of divorce, which affects all marriages and carries a threat to all women. Further, even where there is no immediate threat of divorce, domestic unhappiness is rife, and this can be traced to all sorts of factors, chief among which is the unholiness of family life. The practice of birth control is another serious disorder, for what marriage can survive on the basis of adolescent romanticism?

The Community. There needs to be a community life beyond the family. Men especially need a little world where they are known by their first names, where they are accepted for what they are, where people care whether they live or die, are happy or unhappy. It should be an organic community, like a village or a really active parish, or a self-contained small town. But organic communities have nearly disappeared with over-centralization. Five hundred people crushed together in the same subway train, packed into the same Broadway nightclub, decorously arranged in the same suburb, or lined up in rows in the same insurance office, are not a community. Ten mothers of infant babies in the same park, an alumni association, an air-raid warden crew, or the local chapter of the Knights of Columbus, are only faintly so.

In place of the community we are offered "one world." It is too big. Even half a world is too big. It does not matter psychologically how the large nations are apportioned, so long only as a man can carry on his ordinary affairs in a pint-sized puddle to which he has some relevance. Let there be a million such puddles comprising one state, if only each man has his own puddle and doesn't have to crack his brain to comprehend Japanese affairs of state, or Indonesian economics. The man who prefers the kitchen gossip of the tabloids to a full account of the proceedings of the United Nations Assembly is at least biting off something he can chew. Perhaps he would lift his intellectual level to politics and economics if these were small-scale enough.

Loneliness reflects the absence of community life, and also the absence of a healthy family life of the sort which can embrace aging grandparents and indigent great uncles. It is all too common in large cities, especially among unmarried women and old people. If you really

face the truth of the problem you have to admit that most loneliness should never have been in the first place. Unless a woman brings social ostracism upon herself by some terrible deed or deficiency, she should be accepted and at home someplace with all her eccentricities (of which she would have much fewer) and faults. Both the usual diagnosis (that lonely Miss X has a personality defect that can probably be remedied by a charm school or psychoanalysis) and the usually recommended cure (attendance at artificial gatherings full of other forlorn souls), is caloused, uncomprehending, and unlikely to succeed.

Authority and function. Christianity teaches that every man has a particular job to do in the world and that he will be judged according to how well he does it. The corollary proposition is that it takes all kinds to make a world and that there is indeed a natural diversity among men. Not all men are fit to rule; not all men are fit to contemplate.

Here contemporary American society is at its greatest odds with the Church. Anyone can be president of the United States; anyone can make a million dollars; and all people ought to desire both. In consequence we have a society in which very intelligent men are doing stupid work (because only a handful of people run everything), which is a strain on them; in which many stupid men (through graft or inheritance) are doing work far beyond their intellectual capacity, which is a strain on *them*; in which a very few intelligent men have vast responsibilities, and die early of coronary thrombosis. We have a society in which the president is hopelessly overburdened and where every last clerk and truck driver feels duty bound to decide all matters of state along with him. Nobody has security. Everybody suffers from envy. No one is contented with his state in life (and, indeed, few people can boast of a state in life). Avarice is universal. This is background for thousands upon thousands of neuroses and psychoses which would never have occurred in a simpler and more reasonable society.

The Normal Man

Man is composed of body and soul, in a substantial unity. Psycho-somatic medicine (which is the last but one fad in psychological circles) is an elegant way of saying the same thing. The psyche is the soul (divested usually of its true spiritual nature) and the somatic part refers to the body. One influences the other, as doctors are rediscovering. However, the relationship between body and soul is one of true unity, not just of mutual influence. The philosophical way of putting it is that the soul is the *substantial form* of the body. Without a soul the body cannot operate, and soon corrupts, as is evident in death which is the separation of soul and body. The soul is the vital principle of operation in the whole man. The body is the soul's avenue of knowledge and the vehicle of much of its operation.

In most cases the body and soul operate as a unit. It is not surprising then that a man down with the flu is depressed in spirits, or that a man habitually lost in lust will lose his mind.

THE NORMAL MAN IS THE HIERARCHICAL MAN, OF WHOM THE EXEMPLAR IS THE SAINT.

The pictures on pages 24 and 25 give a rough illustration of the hierarchical man and his disordered opposite. In this crude presentation the hierarchical man is grossly oversimplified, while his opposite is unnecessarily chaotic. In reality certain localized defects, if severe, would suffice for a mental breakdown.

The important thing to note in the pictures is that a man's balance depends on the right ordering of all his parts; the lower subordinate to and governed by the higher. Thus the passions (emotions) should be subject to reason. The reason, in turn, should be subject itself to God.

There are two sorts of spiritual disorders in man: mental disease and sin. Mortal sin is a matter specifically of the will's direction. Mental disease may mean a disorder in the functioning of the mind or of the will, or it may mean failure of the reason to govern the passions.

Sin and insanity are related disorders but not parallel disorders. The saint is the most sane of men, because the concept of sanctity includes perfect sanity. That is why peace is the fruit of holiness, because peace is defined as the tranquillity of order, which tranquillity consists in all the appetitive movements in one man being set at rest together. Otherwise the two disorders are not necessarily coincidental. A man can be grievously proud, yet sane. A demented man can be in the state of grace.

DIFFERENCES IN PEOPLE

1. Differences in Intellectual Capacity

Other things being equal, the simple-minded and the very intelligent men are the most easily unbalanced. A simple intellect cannot handle complex and subtle ideas because it is unable to resolve seeming contraries and make subtle distinctions. There are quite a few simple people in the world. For their own happiness, sanity and sanctity, they should lead simple, peaceful, ordered lives according to truths authoritatively given them by others. The Catholic Church has always guarded the simple, and the near-simple. She has protected them when she could from religious controversy (while the wise could debate about such matters publicly), from reading harmful books, and even from the mental and moral tangles of Hollywood. When She made a society the simple were mostly on the land, close to animals and fields, folk music and dancing, and their guardian the Church. Even today the mildly demented among them can occasionally find sanctuary working in peace, silence, and simplicity for a monastery or convent.

Heaven help the simple today! The schools want them to make up their own minds about the gravest problems of life and eternity. The newspapers and radio invite them to consider matters too difficult for international statesmen to settle. Everyone has to have an opinion about everything, whether or not it is within his province or competence.

The very intelligent have a different problem, peculiar to societies like ours. Intelligence drives the mind to the discovery of basic principles, to corrolating, comparing, weighing, testing. A philosophical genius could easily go mad in Harvard or Yale, where every professor consciously or unconsciously contradicts his colleagues, to say nothing of the internal inconsistencies in his own theories. In a world devoid of fundamental certainties, and even implicitly denying the possibility of discovering truth, its best brains are tempted to blow themselves out. When high intellectual quality is combined, as it often soon is, with escape via the sense pleasures, the hazards are even greater. Again it is the Church which could have saved them, and would have in another age. The mind driven to distraction by Nietzsche and Hegel would have found rest, joy and adventure in the certainty of the Faith and the lucidity of the *Summa Theologica*.

2. Sex Differences

Men and women, being made to complement each other, have sort of half-natures. What one lacks the other is meant to supply. It works out very neatly when they pair off to start families, as was intended. The man stands on his own feet and goes about taking care of the welfare of his family and society. He is given to manliness, courage and enterprise. He is objective in his reasoning, usually accurate in his judgments, and not much interested in personalities. His wife's intelligence is more diffuse. Her judgments are made with the spontaneous assistance of her heart and her senses. They are often more penetrating than her husband's, but sometimes not so accurate. She is subject to moods and depressions traceable to physiological sources and considerably modified by the presence of a loving husband. She cheerfully will give herself entirely for her husband and children.

The very possibility of divorce unsettles all marriages. It is the woman who suffers chiefly from the prospect of impermanence in marriage, since hers is the dependent nature. Her normal womanliness, domesticity and tenderness can be twisted into instability, emotionalism and vacillation, fertile ground for neuroses. Current ideals of married love as reflected in movies, magazine stories and divorce courts, are completely cock-eyed morally and psychologically. The ideal woman as portrayed therein just doesn't exist. She is radiantly and persistently beautiful. She never becomes old. She never becomes pregnant. She

falls in love only with worthy and devastatingly handsome men, who reciprocate an hundredfold. It is all very adolescent and imaginary. In real life not all girls are beautiful, but all of them are aching for a totality of devotion to someone. They ought to expend their generosity in a secure domestic situation. If a woman's marriage is not secure or if she is not married her need for devotion will find another outlet, which ought to be in piety. There is sound psychological basis for calling women "the devout female sex." Psychologically, if one may say so, they need God more than men do, because their nature demands that they give themselves. Here it is interesting parenthetically to note that God does really supply much of what is wanting in the natural order, such as fulfillment to a woman's nature and solace to the afflicted.

A woman's mental balance is related to her necessity of self-giving. Even the selfish, gold-digger type of woman cannot escape her own nature, and usually ends up hopelessly devoted to some quite worthless member of the opposite sex. As for most women, their happiness, and often their mental balance, depends on what they choose to worship. A husband, securely held by bonds other than adolescent physical charms, plus a house-full of children in constant need of attention, is the safest environment for the majority of women. The alternative is the convent, which supplies a framework for selfless devotion to a high ideal, and does in fact provide most of its nuns with a full, joyful life culminating in serenity. One of the greatest lacks among most non-Catholics is a framework, like a community of nuns, within which to lead a selfless life. Even the works of mercy have become professionalized, so that a girl who wants to spend herself as a nurse or social worker usually finds herself instead making rather a good thing of a career to which the sick and the poor are incidental. This is the fundamental reason for discontent among nurses and social workers. They are unhappy not so much because they are underpaid, but because they are paid.

Unmarried girls who go in for business careers are in a much worse state. There is nothing very satisfactory about giving yourself wholly to International Business Machines or R. H. Macy. It is usually only possible to bring yourself to spend yourself for their causes via a personal devotion, whether from afar or all too dangerously near, to the first vice president, or the section manager or the supervisor of the filing department. This fact is well recognized in shrewd personnel practice, and accounts for the unusual charm found among the company's representatives whose special duty it is to persuade office girls to work overtime. Never mind the disorder it may cause in the affections of plain little Miss Brown, whose life seems so drab on the exterior, but whose day dreams are wildly exciting and not a little adulterous.

There is another grave tension on the modern woman, and that is

the strain of trying to be like a man. Its most pronounced manifestations are found among successful business women. They are either calloused and hard (much more unattractively so than men who are calloused and hard), or they are strained to the point of, or beyond, a nervous breakdown. Self-sufficiency and objectivity, which are necessary in high positions in our competitive society, are not natural feminine characteristics.

Women trying to imitate men is at its worst in matters of sex. Traditional morals, double standard and all, are consistent with the psychology of the sexes. A man's passions are distinct from his intellectual judgment and he can be promiscuous without involving his whole nature. He does not fall in love with every girl he makes love to. It is not so with women. Their hearts go right along with their feelings, and drag the intellect after, causing no end of trouble, and possibly unbalancing them. Nor do women who try to be calloused about these things (possibly at the behest of a psychoanalyst whom Heaven forgive!) succeed in becoming like men. Rather are they degraded to something below the human species.

Men's mental balance stands more strain in personal and domestic affairs than does women's, because men are more objective and self-sufficient, in general less sensitive. For unbalance in men one should look to other factors. The war is the most important factor now. In it men were brutalized and demoralized, shocked and paralyzed with fear. Another common and general cause is industrialism, which frustrates the initiative, responsibility and creativity of men, and carries the constant threat of insecurity. Not having a functional, secure place in the world of affairs puts a man in roughly the same position as a woman who is insecure in her home.

3. Temperamental Differences

Four basic temperaments have been recognized since ancient times. Most modern efforts to classify people according to bodily structure or the bumps on their heads or some other physical factors are efforts to discover a measurable basis for temperamental differences and have so far been unsuccessful. Evidently the differences of temperament though of the body rather than of the soul (and therefore inheritable) are diffuse.

Knowledge of temperament provides a guide as to how to treat different people; whether to console a person or be harsh with him; whether to spank a child or gently reprimand him. Temperamental differences are very important in relation to sanity. Why is only one child out of six neurotic as a result of identical home conditions? Why does one girl on the assembly line have hysterics after two days and the next girl remain placid after five years? Usually temperament is the

deciding factor.

Certain factors modify or cloud one's native temperament. You cannot easily discern the temperament of a holy person, because he will have overcome the defects of it. Gross sinners are so much alike that temperament is not evident. Mental disease also can blur temperamental distinctions.

The four basic temperaments* are the choleric, melancholic, sanguine and phlegmatic. Most people are a mixture of two temperaments one modifying the other.

The Choleric is the executive type, with great drive, ambition and capability; with powers of organization and a love of commanding. He has two minds and no heart, very little human sympathy. He has great pride and is given to anger. Choleric people direct the great enterprises of the world. In our day that means big business. The handful of men who direct our gigantic commercial enterprises are mostly choleric. This type rarely goes insane because, despite strong passions, the choleric operate chiefly by intellect and will. These men do a super-human amount of work. They break down physically rather than mentally, usually from heart trouble.

The Melancholic is more the thoughtful type. His temperament is the most unfortunate from the point of view of mental balance. Melancholic people react slowly, feel deeply, and tend excessively to the passion of sorrow. They naturally see the dark side of things, often to the point of warping their judgments. When they go overboard in their sorrow they are candidates for involuntional melancholia, a madness of despair with suicidal tendencies.

Melancholic people are naturally reflective, serious, passive, reserved, irresolute, diffident, pusillanimous, given to solitude and easily falling into day dreaming. For all that many saints and great creative thinkers have been melancholic.

People of this temperament need God more than others. When they are "emotionally unbalanced" their need for religion is acute, and indeed it is doubtful if anything else can help them. Excessive talking about their troubles, as in psychoanalysis, can only aggravate the difficulty. Naturally speaking it is almost impossible to restore a melancholic to mental balance once he has reached the psychotic stage.

The Sanguine is charming and superficial. These people have weak passions but are quick. They have great optimism, usually unfounded; love fine clothes and good manners, are cheerful and vain. Except in that they are unstable they are proof against mental disorders.

* For an admirable and more detailed description of the temperaments, see "The Four Temperaments," by the Rev. Conrad Hock. Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee 1, Wisconsin.

However their instability, if increased by careless upbringing or by unstable economic and domestic conditions, can eventually cause a breakdown.

The Phlegmatic is slow but not deep. People of this temperament have weak passions. They are the office workers who seem to have an infinite capacity for being bored, who can do the same monotonous work for years on end with solicitude only for a full lunch hour. These are the children it is quite safe to spank and even then you won't make much as an impression.

It takes a lot to unbalance a phlegmatic person. However should he lose his mental balance, it will be almost impossible for him to recover, because of the difficulty of arousing him to make an effort.

A man with an upsurging "id",

Sought relief from the life he had hid,

"Oh go right ahead",

The psychiatrist said,

"You've just done what your libido bid!"

But he answered them short

With a violent retort,

"If I have then no guilt,

What a monster you've built.

Did I sin? Well, I certainly did!"



PART II. DISORDERS SEATED IN THE INTELLECT

Functional mental disorders involve the spiritual nature of man. They are disorders either within the mind itself (defective operation of the intellectual faculty or the will) or of the mind's jurisdiction over the passions (emotions).

The three elements chiefly involved are the intellect, the will and the passions. The inter-relationship of these three elements is very close. Nevertheless we shall make logical distinction between them for purposes of orderly discussion. This division will be useful in explaining the origin of mental disorders although it may have no clinical value.

The Nature of the Intellectual Faculty

The intellect is not simply a faculty for knowing but a faculty for knowing *truth*. It is determined as to universal truth, but not as to particular truths. That means that in the presence of the Beatific Vision the mind can no longer be deceived. Here on earth the mind can accept error for the grain of truth that is usually in it. Nothing, as erroneous, can be accepted by the mind. So, for instance, self-contradictory statements are instantly rejected. The fact that the mind is made to know truth is the reason why what really is true always seems to put the mind at rest, seems to correspond with something already in the mind.

The way the mind works is just the opposite from the way of the senses. The senses are concerned with particulars; *this* rose, and *that* bottle of scotch. The mind's first concern is with universals. The mind has to have some universal goal or objective before it can even begin to operate. You have to know you are going to Chicago before you can decide which route to take. It is as simple as that. The way it is put philosophically is that the end is the last in the order of execution, first in order of intention, and that you have to have the first general intention before you can make lesser particular intentions.

This means that nobody can live without a purpose in life, and that there can be only one last end, although a man can have a lot of proximate ends so long only as they are ordered somehow to the final goal.

Now the mental disorders which we are going to consider as chiefly in the intellectual faculty are all related to this matter of the last end. If a man cannot find a last end he is incapable of mature operation; if his last end is false he will suffer more or less; if his last end is vague and indistinct he will not be able to derive secondary principles of operation from it.

God and False Gods

Our last end and perfect happiness is God. As St. Augustine has said: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee."

If we set up something else as our final goal that something else becomes a god to us. This fact is quite often striking, so that we say, for instance, that a man *worships* his belly when his life is devoted to fine eating. All final ends have a sort of infinity about them. Thus, not the ambition to have enough clothes to cover our nakedness, which could easily be arranged; but to be well dressed, which tends toward infinity. So also not to make a hundred dollars a week, unless this goal be very remote; but to make a million dollars or just to make money in general. You have to take your last end seriously, worship it, even to the extent of sacrificing for it, and let it give order to your life.

Here we come upon the question of sanctity and sanity again. Mortal sin is the deliberate turning away from God as one's last end, and the consequent turning to another last end. Because of the deliberate element, however, the sin is in the will rather than in the intellect. It is possible through ignorance to have a badly distorted view of God as your last end, and yet not be in mortal sin. This is especially the case in inculpable paganism and material heresy. However, most false gods do indicate a disordered will, even if not an incipient mental disorder. The road to Hell is not necessarily via the insane asylum.

On the other hand, you are in a bad way if you have no final goal

at all, a state which is not uncommon today. You can vacillate only so long before you slow down to a full stop. A person who hesitates to accept the goals currently offered by a materialistic world, yet lacks opportunity or drive to discover better, may well be in a better state spiritually than his eager-beaver confreres. It sometimes seems almost as though God allowed some to lose their sanity as a merciful escape from an intolerable situation in which they declined to compromise. These are the people who would have found God if we had made God known in the market-place as we ought. Perhaps they will recover their sanity again, and sanctity too, if we go out and minister to them in charity.

From a purely psychological point of view (which is not the final criterion) it is better to have a false end than no end at all. Almost any end will preserve an hierarchy within one's nature even if it is distorted a bit. This doesn't mean you can choose a final end at random. You have to have some conviction about it or it's as good as no end at all.

From the final goal derives the first intention, and from that all the secondary goals and secondary intentions. Let us say that a man has decided his goal is making money. How neat it is. Everything falls into place. He moves to the suburbs, buys his wife a fur coat, chooses a dark-blue tie, joins the Masons, and sends his son to Yale, all as remotely or directly auxiliary to the accumulation of wealth. Such a man will keep his sanity up unto the very gates of Hell unless he loses confidence in his goal, or despairs of reaching it. Since the making of money has no natural limit but can continue to infinity, it is a good goal for keeping up one's interest. There is little danger that it will be realized and the emptiness of it seen. On the other hand, in these times of economic uncertainty, there is the prospect of despair. A bad stock market crash might send our man insane. But we shall come to despair presently. One more word about our example. Notice that he will practice austerity in the pursuit of his ideal. If he really believes, he will not be a jolly drunkard or waste money on wild women. The austerity will increase his chances of sanity on the whole, as it will keep his emotions in order. Hitler and Stalin have not been conspicuously sullied by lust and carousing in their steadfast pursuit of power. Maybe this explains why they have not gone mad in their madness. Sense indulgence can be very debilitating.

Psychologically, esoteric religions like theosophy are useful, if you





Harvard man with world
on his shoulders.

can bring yourself to believe them. They preserve the sense of mystery which really does shroud God. It is more restful to the mind to consider too many things mysterious and above it, than to try to analyze and dissect the sort of god liberal education usually offers: a god at once responsible for the entire universe and yet capable of our complete comprehension, some sort of a mathematical formula perhaps. Clearly

such a god is no god at all, since blind forces and mathematical formulae are considerably inferior to the men who are, in the concepts of the same liberal school, the finest emergent evolution types yet: the contemporary gods. What such thinking resolves itself into is that we are god, and therefore we are our own last end. It's a sort of egomania, a madness per se. Self-worship is by all odds the worst form of worship, save only Devil worship. Even unaccompanied by malice it is a menace to sanity, especially to those who think or feel deeply. Many a college graduate is wandering around with mental indigestion from trying to figure out, comprehend, coordinate and encompass the world of which he appears to himself to be the focal point. It leads to headaches and swelling of the brain; then to mental torment, and possibly to madness. If our student has a strong moral sense he is also carrying the world around on his shoulders: a very heavy, sometimes crushing load. His to wipe out venereal disease, his to put an end to war, and all the time he may be a person of no influence or position whatever even for initiating such crusades. It's not so much a matter of pride as of having been maneuvered into the control position of the universe through having unfortunately attended the best colleges. What a relief it would be to learn that God's Providence presides over all things. It would even be a relief to believe that the goddess of the Atlantic Ocean will wipe out all suffering if only men go about their daily business with confidence and blow kisses oceanward each day at high noon.

Of the many possibilities for false worship there is one more which ought to be mentioned and that is worship of another person. This most tempting form of false worship can be recognized by the fact that one orders one's life to the person in question; just as Hitler's youth directed their whole lives to the Feuhrer. We have the same unhealthy element in our love affairs. Our popular songs tend more to "I worship and I adore you," than to "You are so beautiful."

We said before that melancholic people especially need a strong religion to balance their despondent nature. Lacking it they are the ones most likely to go overboard in false worship of another person. Especially is this true of melancholic women when they fall in love. Since men find it wearing to play the dual role of lover and god, the women's hearts are often broken. They then easily fall into despair and sometimes want to kill themselves.

Freud had a misdirected insight into this problem. He saw the tendency of some women to expect mere men to be more than husbands and lovers and guessed the women were looking for fathers, which sounds plausible because of the fatherliness of God. To explain it Freud cooked up a theory about how every young girl has to go through a period of falling in love with her father before she can fall in love properly with young men. It is like Freud to have made fathers (who are handy, to be sure) suddenly dispensable to the psychical development of their daughters, while waving away a traditional prejudice in favor of God's indispensability.

What's Wrong With True Worship?

Since Catholics know the only true God and have their last end all set and certain, they should be marvelously well balanced, at least spiritually. One can understand how bad Catholics might run into trouble, but when pious Catholics have nervous breakdowns, when even nuns and priests go insane, does it not call for some explanation? We think it does, despite the fact that deeply religious people have the lowest insanity rate.

You need not only to have a final end, but to have one from which distinct secondary principles can be derived. The true final end, and the most universal one, is God, but it is also the farthest away in a sense, because it really is the final end, and many are the paths which lead to God, according to the nature and work and temperament and circumstances of every man. In between a man and his final end of God there is a complicated maze which he must tread according to certain derivative principles. Otherwise God is meaningless as a final end. All right, where are the principles? There are the ten commandments, largely prohibitory, except for the injunction to love God with our whole hearts (which in turn needs a multitude of derivative applications as regards daily life). There are the precepts of the Church, which have limited application. But where are the guiding principles for choosing a job? For social life? For much of professional life, and for many other spheres of activity? For the most part they have not been worked out in regard to our society, for we live in a society which the Church did not make, which is not built on Catholic foundations, or even on the

foundations of the natural law. There is that wide gap between religion and daily life which INTEGRITY is always talking about, and which is creating a terrific tension in all our lives. This is probably the root reason why lay Catholics have mental breakdowns. The more penetrating and sensitive they are the more sharply they feel the contrast between the nobility of their religion and the sordidness of their economic aspirations; between the intensity of their spiritual life and the dullness of mechanical work and play. But if they do not recognize it as a tension, they lead double lives and feel it dimly. Most of them are trying to serve both God and Mammon. It is impossible, psychologically and on the authority of revelation. To do so would be to have two final ends contradicting each other. They are in this spot. They have a distant goal, which is God, but no precise rules, other than prohibitory and devotional, for getting there. Meanwhile they have a temporal life to live. So they accept the working principles of Mammon, and shift to a godly economy for devotional purposes. Or they try to make a synthesis between spiritual progress and worldly success. Now the Protestants can do this because in a sense they are responsible for the underlying principles of our economic order. *Catholics cannot, because their religion continually confronts them with the antithesis which exists between the spirit of the world and the spirit of God.* When Catholics attempt a synthesis they merely try to lead Catholic lives within a secular framework by the vigorous practice of minor virtues; try to fit God into a Mammon scheme of things. They are like a man who,



having taken a bride, sees her only clandestinely, while daily appearing in public with another woman. Besides the scandal, it is a strain, and one which could easily provoke a nervous breakdown.

With religious the situation is a little different, but comparable. They don't need temporal principles so much as lay people do. What



Young man lacking a final end.

direction, instruction in advancing in prayer, and liturgy. Instead they usually get, or fall into, either mediocrity or sentimentality or both. Mediocrity means a lessening of fervor, a deadening of the ideal. Sentimentality means reducing religious practice to the sense level of feeling. Devotionalism is an exploitation of the emotions, which is dangerous for one's spiritual health, and sometimes leads to a crazed state. The more intelligent a person is, the more dangerous it is to feed him pious fluff in religion because humility keeps a pious person from discarding what his intelligence tells him is nonsense. Instead he tries to erect a system without substance, to mull over and reflect on and live by, ideas which are too puffy for him. Such a person often falls into scrupulosity.

No Life Without Purpose

It isn't always easy to find a last end, and sometimes it is impossible. In that case the person is bogged down completely and literally cannot operate. You cannot do the first things unless you have a last end. You cannot, for instance, keep your room clean, or yourself neat, or get to appointments on time, or read the latest book, or look for a job, if you are unable to decide what is the purpose of life. It is quite irrational of parents to say to their neurotic children, "Take your mind out of the clouds and at least clean your room. That's easy enough." It isn't easy. It's impossible, if you don't see any reason for living anyhow. It may be hard to save a person who is headed for what will presently be diagnosed as schizophrenia, but the only real cure is to provide an ultimate reason for living. The victim is often enough an idealistic adolescent who declines to accept the drab commercial future envisioned by his parents, and yet has not had sufficient contact with vital religion to give credence to his noble feelings. His idealism ought to be caught up and encouraged (and could easily be by religion, or by the pseudo-religion which is Communism). But the conservative world wants to make him settle down to being worldly; to bow to commercialism and

they need, and what they frequently do not get, is theology. They need not only to aim at God, but to know how to progress toward Him in prayer and sanctification, and they need to know this pretty specifically. The same thing holds for pious souls in the world who are engaged in works of mercy or are otherwise removed from the usual temporal activities. They are starved from lack of religious instruction commensurate with their fervor and desire. They need dogma, spiritual

defer to the omnipotence of respectability. When they fail, he makes his exit from the rational world; when they succeed he takes his place in a humdrum office, and may never again become "unbalanced." It is not for us to measure the spiritual cost of his compromise, but sometimes when reading case histories of psychiatric "cures," you have an oppressive sense that the doctor has been the devil's advocate.

Marking Time

For the person who is not able to find a final end, because none of those offered tempt to belief or desirability, there are two ways to stave off slowing down to a full stop, or losing control of a confused mind. Both are temporary measures, but given time, what cannot a man discover?

The one way out is to postpone the necessity of choosing a final end, which always involves postponing one's full maturity. The army offers a convenient respite, for instance. It has its own mysterious ends, which one can generally presume to be good. All you have to do is to obey. The purpose of life can wait. Who knows if one will come back alive? How many young men were at loose ends in regard to their lives' purpose and work is evidenced by the general lethargy among returned veterans, for the army is not a likely place to discover the purpose of life if you don't know it already. Many of them are falling into another temporary groove: education. Education for what? Education to prepare for a life that you don't know the purpose of, in many cases. You vaguely hope that college will tell you the purpose of life. But that is the last thing a modern college will tell you. So after you get a B.A. you go on to your M.A., still hoping. Then you get your Ph.D. and have a nervous breakdown, which can gracefully be attributed to overwork.

Or you can escape via the senses. We shall discuss this outlet under the passions, because there are several different ways of being precipitated into it. One thing only we would like to point out here. Sense pleasures really can be set up as final ends, by drastic foreshortening of life. "I decline to look beyond midnight tonight, and my one ambition until then is to get drunk."



Girl foreshortening her final end.

PART III. DISORDERS SEATED IN THE WILL

Psychiatry can never be an exact science because of the freedom of the will. The will is the only really capricious element in the universe. Men may justifiably hope to be able exactly to predict the weather, but not human conduct. There are two factors involved which are essentially beyond their powers of prognostication: free will and the grace of God. Many psychiatrists deny the existence of both. The wonder is that they have any success at all.

Realize that the will is a blind faculty. It desires, but it cannot desire what it does not know. Therefore it is tied absolutely to the intellect. This does not mean that it is governed by the intellect, but rather the reverse, although the influence is mutual. Nevertheless it is dependent for its knowledge, and were the knowledge to be entirely cut off, the will would be impotent and the person mad.



The intellect moves the will as presenting its object to it. The will desires good and it is determined to the universal good. But short of God, who is the universal good, the will can choose any particular thing as good, so long only as the intellect can be brought to present the good side so the will can choose it. Short of God everything has its good and bad aspects (just as all errors have a grain of truth); the only thing is that the will has to choose something *as good*. This is verified over and over again in common experience.

The good thing about castor oil is that it may make you well. The bad thing is the awful taste. As long as you think about the bad taste you can't take the medicine. But if you want to get well badly enough you may be able to bring yourself to act. Exterior influences on the will always have to modify the intellectual stalemate which prevents action. They bring pressure to bear. They rush up reserve arguments, to twist the intellectual judgment and move the will. That's why fear is so useful. A mother's threat of a spanking may make the prospect of taking castor oil attractive by contrast with the alternative.

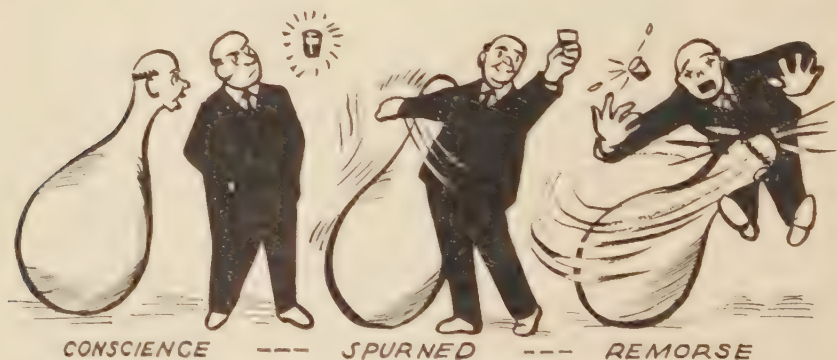
Things done through fear are truly voluntary, though under some pressure. It is otherwise with coercion. If you force medicine down the throat of the screaming and protesting child, the act of taking castor oil is completely involuntary, however effective medicinally.

The will and intellect cooperate only in practical judgments, and not in speculative matters. The act is simultaneous, neither will nor intellect having chronological primacy. But there is a primacy of knowledge on the part of the intellect; a primacy of election on the part of the will. Once the judgment has been formed the will has to follow along, but it is the will which moves the intellect to make the judgment.

The Matter of the Guilty Conscience

When the practical judgment of the intellect is a moral one, the conscience is involved. The conscience isn't a special faculty, it's simply the name for the practical moral judgment of the intellect. But it has a particular insistence about it which gives it almost a personality.

It will be useful to recall here that man belongs to the moral order, since he has a free will. It is a matter of indifference which subway you take home (because that is not a moral question) but it is not a matter of indifference whether or not you steal money. Animals have instincts to lead them to do what they ought to do. We have a conscience which merely informs us. Nor do we have to obey, because we have free wills. But just disobey and see what trouble you get into. First of all, it's a sin ever to go against your conscience. Often enough it's also neurotic trouble. Here's how the conscience operates:



By the time conscience has become remorse of conscience the disorder which is sin has set in and the disorder which is lack of peace is swinging into operation.

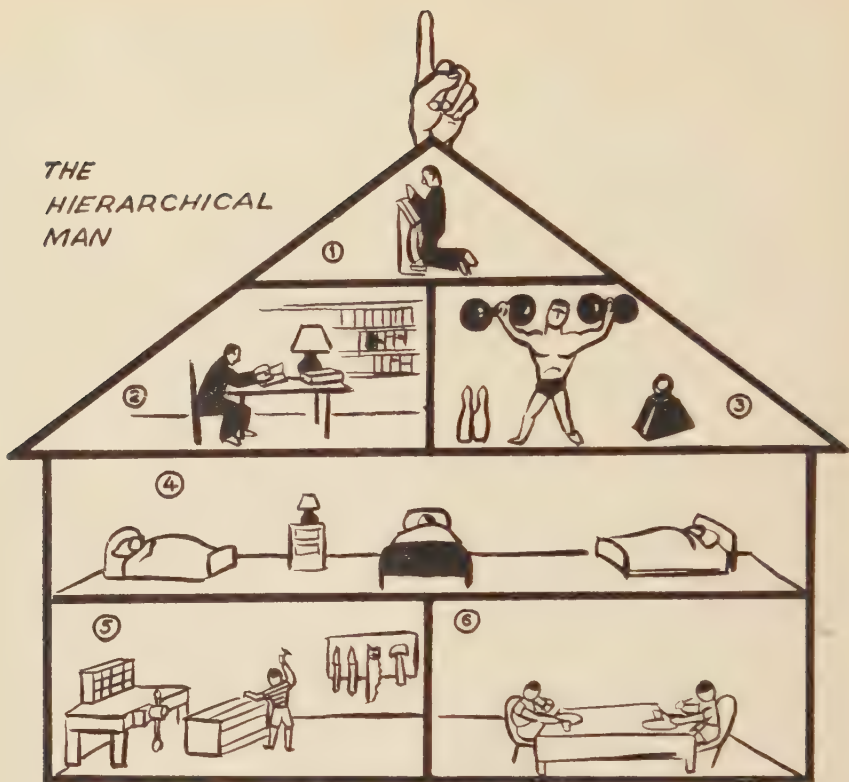
The cure for remorse of conscience is absolution which literally does wipe the slate clean, restore peace and grace. Absolution (it comes from God of course, who else could do these things?) is normally and most easily obtained in the confessional, but obtainable extraordinarily

with perfect contrition, by direct recourse to God.

The alternatives to absolution are hardness (which is a building up of resistance to, a dulling of, the conscience), or some sort of nervous disorder, minor or major.

It is not strange that today, when the moral order is so largely ignored or denied, that there should be many disorders and derangements stemming from tortured and twisted consciences. Anyone who has had any contact with the insane can testify to the overt manifestation of this. Men's instincts are better in this regard than much formal education. The drive to confess and be forgiven seeks curious outlets, but it has a healthy origin. It accounts for the appeal of revivalist Protestantism, with its mass meetings at which "sinners" are urged publicly to manifest their sorrow and change of heart. Whoever has seen the sordid, undignified, and over-emotional exhibition put on by evangelists cannot, even so, help but feel that the humiliation endured by the repentant sinners abundantly suffices for perfect contrition and perhaps often does indeed win them the absolution which comes so easily to Catholics. Amid more luxurious surroundings, the Oxford Group provides a confessional for the better heeled. Alcoholics Anonymous has a similar provision, treated somewhat gingerly by members, who seem to prefer to relate their colorful misdeeds on public lecture platforms. Even blurting out one's tale at random helps, insofar as it relieves the tension. Most such accounts do contain contrition of a sort anyhow, what with the frequent expression of "I ought not to have," "What a fool I was," "My weakness was so great," etc. Any such recital is beneficial to a person's mental health, at least the first time. The danger is that what verges on indecent spiritual exposure to begin with will become a habit and the person may easily come to brag about what he formerly recited with shame. Then he is in the same spot as those who never had any contrition but were loose-tongued about their immorality only to show what virile fellows they were: a state morally grave and mentally dangerous.

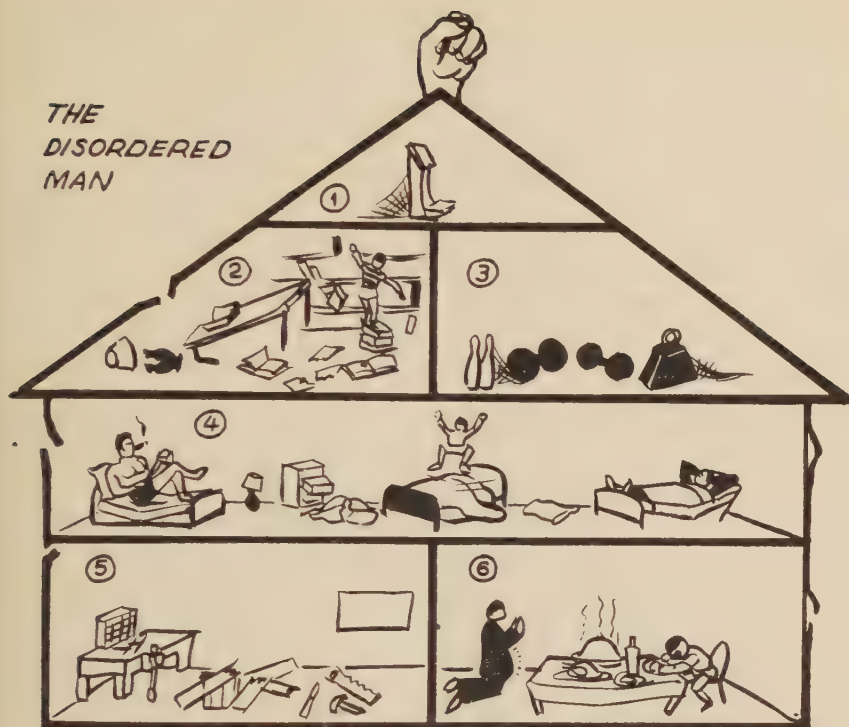
Is it odd that pent-up remorse of conscience should seek a physical outlet? There is a real unity between our bodies and souls. An intensity which is frustrated spiritually will seek relief physically, and usually an appropriate one. When a moral cleansing is in order it may find expression in physical cleansing; in washing hands all the time, or bathing with undo frequency. A neurotic's new year's resolutions are often about bathing, or laundering or neatness. They are the physical parallel of the Catholic penitent's post-confession resolutions to be careful about morning and evening prayers and to receive the sacraments more frequently. Look at our society. There never was such a mania for cleanliness, such a preoccupation with plumbing, such an interest in bathrooms. Can this be unrelated to our unrelieved guilty consciences?



This is a man compared to a household in which, 1) the entire activity is ordered to GOD. The spiritual faculties: 2) the INTELLECT meditates so that it may make true judgments, 3) the WILL grows strong so as to make decisions, and control the PASSIONS, 4) of which some are dormant, while some are operating in an orderly way. 5) & 6)

Some consciences are naturally stronger than others. All men have a moral sense, but some men show little evidence of it, while others seem driven by theirs.

Those of lax conscience are known to confessors as recidivists. They are the people who confess the same sins over and over again without much contrition and with no real effort at amendment. Pathological personalities are their psychological counterpart. They are the people who persistently steal or forge checks or commit other crimes without noticeable remorse. They usually have a background of lax upbringing which serves to aggravate their native defects. These are



This is a man compared to a disordered household, which 1) ignores God, The **PASSIONS** run wild 2) making true judgments impossible. 3) & 4) The **WILL** grows flabby and the **INTELLECT** does not operate. 5) There is no work, but destruction. 6) Worship is toward **SENSE PLEASURES**.

really moral problems. They fall into psychiatric hands partly through the sentimentality which says that all bad people are really only sick.

The ultra-sensitive consciences provide fertile material for sanctity under proper spiritual guidance. Otherwise they fall into scrupulosity. A person with a "New England conscience" who hasn't very specific objective moral standards is excellent potential neurotic material.

The Matter of an Erroneous Conscience

A conscience may be wrong, either in a vacillating, uncertain way, or triumphantly.

The first case is pretty general in this day of moral chaos. A person has to make his moral judgments catch as catch can, because

the conscience keeps on working even in a semi-vacuum, just as the speculative intellect, starved for substantial food, will keep trying to understand and philosophize about the monotonous work the person is doing, or the petty affairs of his associates. One basis of conscience formation is whispered gutter confidences, usually about sex, and almost always fantastically wrong. Another is what other people think and do—a very fluctuating standard. The movies set the standard now, with advertisements a close second. "Inner feelings" are another poor criterion. What are "inner feelings"? Something you ate, or idle phantasms passing through the imagination. A vague conscience looking into itself for moral standards will get awfully confused. The person will not be able to distinguish between temptation and sin (the consent of the will). Just because a person idly thinks that his brother may be killed in the war does not mean that he wishes his brother were dead. It does not follow from a passing physical attraction that you have consented to the idea of fornication. Here is the trouble with scrupulous people. They cannot distinguish between temptation and sin.

It is interesting to note here that the Freudians hasten to accuse where the Church insistently absolves, and hastens to console. The former doesn't hesitate to say: "You really wish he were dead." "You really hate your mother, don't you?" "You are secretly in love with your brother's wife and that is why you put salt in your brother's coffee. You wanted to poison him."

But a priest would remind you that what pops up in your imagination doesn't constitute sin unless consented to, and he would forbid you to worry about inadvertently putting salt in your brother's coffee just because you were lost in admiration of his wife's fresh beauty in her new blue dress.

Or, again, you form your conscience by your sense of shame. A sense of shame is a good thing, but it can be wrong too. Sex as such often seems shameful to people because they have come by their sex information surreptitiously, or not at all. The Catholics of the last generation have been almost as remiss as non-Catholics, thanks to Puritan influence in both cases, in the matter of sex instruction. Sins of omission in this regard do really account for much mental torture. Now the pendulum has swung and the mental torture is from excesses in the other direction. For a brief moment we had a generation immodest, promiscuous, appallingly outspoken, carefree and gay. The immodesty and promiscuity linger on; tongues continue unrestrained, but the whole business has lost its air of innocence. What happened to the sense of shame? It is still missing, but it will return automatically in its proper role, with a return of a balanced view of sex and the cultivation of the virtue of modesty.

What about consciences which are conscientiously wrong? What about people who are sure they are right, only they are not? What

about those who practice birth control as their civic duty, divorce their wives in the spirit of self-sacrifice, put their cancerous aunts painlessly to death, and practice cannibalism with religious fervor? Well, they won't have guilty consciences. Most non-Catholics who practice birth control, for instance, really feel quite virtuous about it. And, as a matter of fact, they really are not sinning as long as they are sincere in their ignorance. They can, however, be guiltless in the sight of God without getting the slightest sympathy from nature, which always takes its toll. So if their practices are against nature, unnatural, they can expect to suffer natural consequences, the grief or the loneliness or the nervous disorders which they bring upon themselves. Birth control, for instance, is a much greater threat to mental health than a nursery full of children is to physical health. It also indirectly undermines the stability of a marriage and the security of a woman's position. The possibilities of unhappiness and neurosis as the result of practicing homosexuality are far greater, because it is a graver perversion of nature. Other practices, like cannibalism and euthanasia, cause social disorders perhaps along with psychological ones.

What's in the Unconscious?

It is interesting to consider the unconscious in connection with the conscience. There seems no doubt but that the deeps of our nature are not readily accessible to our scrutiny and that they might contain matter in conflict with our conscious life.

The moral judgment which we call the conscience is not under our control but operates according to certain moral considerations of its own. One thing the conscience is very strong and insistent about: that good must be done and evil avoided. We would like here to make the hypothesis that the conscience also has, but dimly, all the natural moral laws as regards the human person, as part of its initial equipment. So, for instance, if you could isolate a person from any sort of moral instruction, he would instinctively react against lying (which is an unnatural abuse of the power of speech), against homosexuality, against birth control, etc. No doubt he would soon become corrupted, or his progeny would (owing to original sin and the insistence of the passions). But the right rules would continue to lie deep within him. If this hypothesis is true then there is a deep-set conflict within people who are following the dictates of an erroneous conscience in good faith. The corollary is that peace, that blessed interior peace that comes from being completely at one with yourself, is the prerogative of the just. It would mean, for instance, that people who practice birth control are dimly disturbed in their unconscious. It would mean that all Communist party members are potential neurotics, if only because of their deliberate denial of the objective criterion of truth.

Here seems a good place to discuss psychoanalysis, which dabbles in the unconscious.

Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis is a method without a very coherent, or generally agreed upon philosophy. It supposes that the causes of mental disease lie deep in the personality, in the unconscious, and that they can be brought into the conscious mind by prolonged, uninhibited talking. Freud is the father and hero of psychoanalysis.

How can psychoanalysis cure conflicts? Conflicts involve conscience and morality. But psychoanalysis is an amoral process at best: at frequent worst it has sort of an inverse morality. Where there is an express conflict of conscience the psychoanalyst will grant absolution, of his sort. It is done by denying the conscience, not the guilt. Nothing is evil to the Freudians; it's only your *attitude* that matters.

In the case of the conflicts mentioned above, where the conscience is making feeble protest from below against its own conscious operation on false information, one has the feeling that the very heart of the conscience is being run down and destroyed by psychoanalysis for it even goes so far in extreme cases as to try to destroy the basic principle that good must be done and evil avoided. At this point psychoanalysis, and any other form of psychiatry that goes along with it, is no longer fit subject for joking, but very close to, and possibly involved in, diabolical activity.

One of Gertrud von le Fort's novels, "The Veil of Veronica,"* treats of this matter. Veronica's Aunt Edelgart hesitates to join the Church for twenty years. Finally she takes instructions and then refuses to make her confession. Follows a period of intense spiritual suffering, to cure which she goes to a psychiatrist. From him she obtains a sort of peace, followed by diabolical disturbances. She is finally freed, not without violence, and enters the Church, making a public confession on her death bed, of which this is an excerpt:

"With my sense of guilt I still believed in God. But a sense of guilt is not the last form of Faith; the last form of Faith begins when one can no longer bear the sense of guilt, when its torment becomes so excruciating that one is driven to hate it. At this time, I thrust away from me everything that could remind me of God: Crucifix and Rosary and Missal, for the sight of them was like a devouring fire. And this is the last form of Faith. Only when his hatred of God is extinguished, does man become a complete unbeliever. And here the truly awful derision in which he, who had me in his power, held me, begins to show itself; I, now in my fear unlocked myself to mortal man—not however to man in his compassion, but to man in his presumption. To this presumption I exposed those deeps of my soul which God alone has reserved to Himself the power to adjust. Instead of flying to the Sacrament, I fled to science: I confessed to the doctor, and I received from him the only absolution which the world has power to give, namely the absolution of the psychiatrist, in the eyes of which there is no sin that cannot be forgiven, because,

* Sheed and Ward, 1934. This quotation is taken from pages 297 and 298.

there being no such thing as the soul, it cannot refuse itself to God. And this absolution conferred on me that terrible peace in which thousands live today whose disease is simply this, that they have despised the peace of God! For even those who are furthest away from Him have an Either-Or in relation to God, otherwise they would not be living.

"From that day forward, I no longer believed in anything, not even in him in whose hands I was—the doctor had soon talked me out of my belief in him. Nor was I any longer animated by feelings of hatred towards God, but on the contrary I started going to Church again—the doctor had likewise advised this, albeit in moderation. I suffered no more from an inner conflict and sadness, but I ate and drank and slept. I ceased to have struggles or temptations, for the simple reason that he in whom I no longer believed, from now on paid no further attention to me, but cast me aside like a worm or a lump of earth. And I myself did not regard myself as other than such. For as what else could I regard myself—there was nothing anywhere but that in the whole universe there was nothing left but matter alone grey, blind matter!"

To return to the psychoanalytic technique as such. It presupposes that you cannot cure a spiritual trouble of which you do not know all the sordid details. That is not true. For one thing, it should not be hard to guess the trouble, for people are much alike and there are only a certain number of things that bother them. A good confessor can guess pretty accurately what is tying the tongue of his unseen penitent, because he knows men. If the psychiatrist is long in doubt it is because he does not know men, and he has an erroneous theory he has to fit the facts into. If a psychiatrist does know the truth about life and men, and can guess what the trouble is with his patient, what is wrong with handing out some information that might be helpful? Let the doctor, or a priest, supply data to a patient tormented by metaphysical problems. Likewise on the matter of sex. Or, if the doctor suspects the person to be tormented with good reason, let him tell about the mercy of God and how to make acts of contrition. These things are, of course, common sense, and likely often done. But they are contrary to the psychoanalytic theory which would persist in airing a person's dirty laundry, and probably much soiled linen as well that wasn't there to begin with, because concentration on sex matters sends the imagination into tail spins.

Let's leave the unconscious alone. Aren't we trying to invent a science of darkness where we ought to be availing ourselves of mystical theology instead. Our earthy and less than earthy parallel to what happens in high spiritual states is suspicious, for the devil imitates. How differently God deals with our unconscious (or if you want to call it that). In the first place He accepts our relationship on the conscious level and only holds us accountable for what we knowingly do. If the enormity of our pride is so near to us that we cannot see it, God waits, and he keeps pouring grace through the sacraments into that

same depth of our being in which Freud discovers so much that is vile. Only after a long time (until we can bear it?) does God set out to purify our innermost nature. He does not trust us to direct the process, but he does it to us, we only suffering it to be done. This is the dark night that mystical theology talks about. The end result is high sanctity. What have the psychoanalysts to show for their efforts? Is it sometimes the death of the soul? They say one of the fruits of psychoanalysis is self-knowledge. But is it? Truly to know yourself is to know what the saints know, which is that you are nothing. You learn it through knowing God, that He is everything.

Diabolism

There is a regular chant in psychiatric textbooks to the effect that the Catholic Church for many ages obscured problems of mental disease because of the superstitious belief in the devil. They are wrong twice. The Church never did attribute all insanity to diabolism. And there is really a devil. He does obsess and possess people. Even today.

Quite often one hears of experiences in insane asylums which can only be explained preternaturally. For instance, patients have been known to become very violent when the Blessed Sacrament was brought into their section of the hospital, even though they did not see the priest and had no way of knowing he had entered.

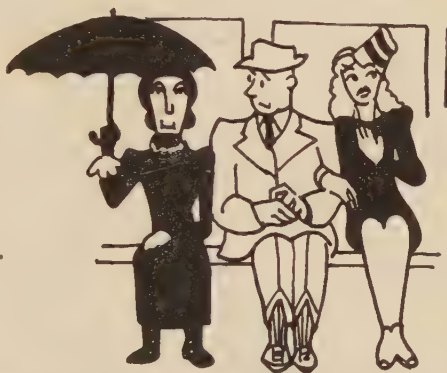
Evidently some of the insanity today is not insanity at all, but diabolical possession. How much? Probably not very much. This is the last explanation which must be given when all others fail (and if the conditions indicate it). Purely natural factors are quite sufficient to account for the undue amount of insanity today, quite apart from this explanation. On the other hand, there are two factors which would lead one to look for diabolical activity. First is the fact that around seventy percent of Americans now are unbaptized, which means the devil has a certain jurisdiction over them. The other is that Freudian psychiatrists are providing grist for the mill.

Diabolical possession means that the devil (or a number of devils) takes possession and control of a person's body; during which time the person himself is usually unconscious, although he may be dimly aware of what is going on. There are intervals, usually violent, when the devil thus takes over. There are other intervals of calm and lucidity when the devil, still evidently remaining, does not interfere with a person's normal functioning.

If you wanted to find diabolical possession in America, the obvious place to look is among the mentally diseased, since that is what possession would look like to our secular minds. The next stop would be to find a classification of patients corresponding to the known characteristics. As it happens, there is such a classification. It is known as multiple personality and its chief mark is the alternating possession of

the same body by distinctly different persons. It is a rare and spectacular "disease," about which physicians have sundry conflicting theories. The public is acquainted with it chiefly in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Treatment is attempted with analysis, hypnosis and other methods. If it really is diabolical possession, how futile and yet how dangerous to the doctors, are their efforts. The devil is driven out forcibly by the exorcism of those having the power, or is persuaded to leave by particular friends.

We had Jane psychoanalyzed
For she was acting queer,
We found that Jane is crazy,
In a different way than we are.



PART IV. DISORDERS ARISING THROUGH THE PASSIONS

Here is where emotional difficulties come in. A passion has no necessary connection with torrid love stories, but is roughly equivalent to an emotion (if strong) or a feeling (if weak). It is an act of the sensitive appetite, a desire on the sense or animal level, of men.

The passions represent joint action of our psychical and physiological natures (as when blood rushes to the head in anger). A lot of contemporary effort is being wasted trying to account for emotional difficulties solely on the physiological level, which is like trying to account for murder by metabolism.

Our passions, though not the highest sphere of our lives, are in a sense the predominant sphere. The idea is to regulate them by reason. To the degree that we do subject our passions to reason we are truly human, we preserve our hierarchical nature, our balance, our sanity. On the other hand, when our passions get out of control we are for that very reason in a bad way. Disordered passions can cause trouble all the way up to and including insanity depending on to what extent they cloud or distort the intellect and so pervert the will. When the passions take over and obliterate the reason, there is madness simply.

Disorders of sin and insanity run a close parallel in the matter of the passions. All the sins of weakness belong to the order of uncontrolled passions and the correspondence between the degree of material sin and the degree of nervous disorder is often startling. So here again

we are reminded that religion is the guardian of sanity. As a matter of fact the Church retains a full understanding of man's nature in regard to the passions. It is intended in man that the passions should be governed by reason, but there is a certain conflict of ends between the two. ("The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.") It was to correct this internal warfare that God gave us the gift of integrity, which we lost by original sin. It is to regain some semblance of integrity that discipline and mortification are necessary in our lives.

The world is completely at odds with the Church in this matter of mortification. Whereas we gain control of ourselves only with difficulty in any case, the world with its false compassion is raising havoc with our natures. A philosophy of self-indulgence runs all through education. Advertising exploits our passions on a gigantic and scientific scale. Advertising and mortification work on exactly the same principles toward different ends. "Feast! Save yourself labor! Buy our cigarettes which show you pictures of such lucious girls!" cry the advertisements. "Fast! Be diligent! Keep your mind pure!" says the Church. No wonder religion is unpopular in these days of ascendant commercialism. Advertising wants to perfect everything except man. Incidentally, a very good case can be made on these grounds for the essential immorality of modern advertising.

The ultimate effect of all this stimulation of sense desires (Heaven help us it is even called "The American Way of Life.") is the multiplication of sorrows. Material things, attractive at first, eventually pall and provoke despair. Spiritual things at first repel then attract and satisfy.

Inhibitions

You might argue that advertising corrupts people only as incidental to its own profit and not from deliberate denial of man's nature. The same cannot be said about some psychiatry which is intent on glorifying the passions at the expense of the reason. According to this notion, it is unhealthy to restrain the passions; and if restrained there will be neurotic manifestations. Hence the popular idea that it is unhygienic to be without sex life.

The truth of the matter of inhibitions is this: every passion involves some bodily change, as counterpart to the spiritual effect. An inhibition is an attempted suppression of the physical part of the passion rather than of the passion itself. It is the suppression not of anger, but of the appearance of anger. It is the pretense of aplomb to hide the reality of embarrassment. But you cannot suppress the physical element in passion and you only succeed in diverting it elsewhere, into ulcers or tics. Inhibitions are usually charged in regard to sex passion, but this is true only insofar as people entertain sex desires which circum-

stances prevent their satisfying. It is not true in the case of people who, for reasons of a higher good, decline to entertain this passion at all. Here again the Church's moral teaching is consonant with our nature: purity of thought is essential to chastity.

Looking at the matter in a large perspective however, it is true that the intensity of human nature is suppressed in the modern world. Human nature is intense. Vitality is its mark. Yet all the way down the line the intensity is frustrated. Our souls are denied a noble cause. Our love is denied worthy objects. Our intellects are deadened, especially in our work. Our creativity is stultified. Our marriages are barren. Our bodies grow flabby from overstuffed furniture and super-comfortable automobiles. We can't even play games and invent amusements. We are passive. We are spectators. We are robots.

But vitality will out. Some people stand up and scream. Some get drunk. Some go in for sex. Some read the tabloids, getting their daily dose of violent death, execution, rape, murder, and all the rest. How near is mass violence to the surface of American life?

Sentimentality, Sex and Lust

Love is basic to all the other passions. Ultimately all human action springs from love. This accounts for the plausibility of the Freudian theory. Freud could not have explained so much by, for instance, hope, as he did by sex, because sex is the most vehement form of this basic passion of love.

Besides the love which is a passion, there is also a rational love seated in our will. It is with this rational love that we love God, and other men for God's sake. We also with this love cherish people in that love of friendship which seeks to give itself and not to possess. When love to which belongs on this rational level because of its object, drops to the sense level, you have a disorder known as sentimentality. We Americans are maudlin in our sentimentality.

This dropping of love from the rational to the sense level has happened often in religion. It comes from an overemphasis on devotional matters. It is characteristic of the "love is my only dogma" type of liberal Protestantism, which tries to solve all its problems by "love" in the absence of principles. What else can this love be but feeling, and chiefly, as it has turned out, the feeling of pity. Pity is a good enough feeling, but needs the guidance of reason. Sentimental pity (more often than malice) is back of the enthusiasm for birth control and euthanasia. Sentimentalists lose full control of their reason. They are fuzzy thinkers of the "how heartless you are to let this poor woman suffer so from cancer," school. They shudder at the mention of Hell. Naturally it does not fit in with their doctrine of love, because it doesn't appeal to their feelings.



Passions under control. . . .

All of us are infected with fuzzy thinking and sentimentality to some degree. It is at least a remote cause of mental disorder, and it makes the cure of neurotics enormously more difficult than it would be otherwise. There is nothing left for it but patiently to instruct and discipline the sloppy modern mind.

Sex is the most vehement form of passionate love since it has to insure, from the natural point of view, that we carry on the race. Although sex is on the sense level it is capable of being caught up with the love of friendship on the rational level, and even divinized through the *sacrament* of matrimony. It is in this way that Christianity has exalted sex. It is wonderful to meditate on the fact that God has not despised our animal nature but has transformed it. He has done the same thing with eating, which is a rather ludicrous procedure considered in itself. On the human level, however, it is a social as well as a biological function. And since the Eucharistic banquet was initiated, eating itself has been elevated to something of a ceremony.

During the decline of the Roman Empire, the primary passions were grossly disordered, with lust and gluttony especially prevalent. Pagan rites included revolting obscenities and sex symbols were everywhere. It took centuries of Christian austerity to restore simple goodness to simple natural phenomena, and to purify the minds of men.

It seems as though the Freudians are bent on making everything obscene again. Freud even has a whole set of sex symbols for the interpretation of dreams. Many people's minds are already so diseased that they cannot see a tall building or a vegetable stand without sex associations.

Instead of lifting sex up to holy familial love, our age is ruthlessly pulling it down to sheer lust, which is sex from which as much reason as possible has been eliminated.

Nothing so distorts the intellect as lust. The imagination keeps feeding the intellect images calculated to distort the judgment. And it is no easy matter to purify a mind of lust once it has been saturated; in fact it is very difficult to get such a person to want to rise out of his mire. Where there is any will to recover, the Church's method is the emergency treatment: constant and continuous attendance at the sacra-

ments, penance as often as one falls, and daily Communion. When a man is beyond self-help God will lift him up so long as he merely consents. The world's methods are quite other. The world invites the mind to the consideration of lust, now everywhere in books, magazines, advertisements, and even radio jokes. Some psychiatrists do the worst possible thing. They urge as a remedy for preoccupation with sex, still more preoccupation with it.

Another reason for sex disorders lies in the fact that people confined by their philosophies to the physical level, the materialists, sometimes have messianic expectations in regard to sex. It's like having a deep yearning which is really for a college education and a house in the country, but which you hope to satisfy with chocolate pecan sundaes (because everyone assures you that houses in the country and college educations don't really exist and that chocolate pecan sundaes are the highest good). Under these circumstances your appetite for chocolate pecan sundaes is insatiable. Maybe nymphomaniacs can be accounted for here.

Fear and Insecurity

Fear chills and paralyzes. This is its physiological aspect. In extreme cases it can turn the hair white, cause more or less permanent shock or amnesia. There were a lot of cases of this during the war. The diagnosis is simple enough. And because the effects are chiefly bodily, physical measures are effective in the cure.

Fear is a special problem today in its aspect of widespread insecurity. It is popular to talk about insecurity as though it were a problem inherent in economics instead of a fear inherent in men, and to try to cure it by guaranteed annual wages and such. This is an exact parallel to our trying to cure unhappiness among nurses by raising their wages, without bothering to account for the fact that they were much happier when they were paid less. There is hardly a contemporary problem which is not now basically and blatantly spiritual. Insecurity is one of them.

Mr. Roosevelt's "We have nothing to fear but fear itself," is a very inaccurate statement. There are a lot of things to be afraid of: atomic bombs, death, economic ruin, starvation, cancer, and the rest. They all fulfill the conditions for exciting the passion of fear: they are evil; they threaten; they are not yet upon us. We are falling all over ourselves to eliminate these causes of fear, but without self-reform. The



Passions in control.

only way to eliminate many of them (all of them can't be eliminated) is for our society to turn again to God and right itself. This doesn't have much popular appeal. Instead we plan to guarantee security where there is no security. We try long and patiently to get Russia to sign a treaty, although we have no reason to suppose that she will honor it. We try to guarantee wages without regard to the economic balance of the industry. We pile up insurance in the face of currency inflation. We huddle together in large cities where we make excellent targets. We tend toward socialist government, by way of assembling all our bad eggs in one basket.

Meanwhile our lives are utterly in God's hands, as always, whether we face the fact or not. As long as we do God's Will things will work out well. Since we pretend He isn't there we continue to suffer the consequences of our own muddling.

Where insecurity is an individual psychological problem there is no cure short of trust in God. People who are worried at 18 about job security at 60 should not be taken seriously on an economic plane. They are in the same boat with people who are afraid to cross streets or walk over bridges. There is only one condition under which they can be freed, not from fear itself (which is often a good thing and is taken care of by the virtue of courage), but from morbid fear. Trust in God. "No harm can come to a good man." "In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, but they are at peace. Alleluia." All sorts of things may happen to us. But that ultimately it will all turn out all right, and that God will give us grace to sustain us in trials, are certainties of faith. Without these certainties who can cure fear? Men will kill themselves for fear of death (for such is the paradoxical character of the human animal).

Despair

Despair is a little further along the road that fear travels. Evil is already upon you in despair, and the sorrow it causes by its presence threatens to overwhelm. The sudden tension and semi-paralysis caused by fear is replaced by deep bodily as well as spiritual depression. People who despair are always tired, weighted down quite literally by their own depression. They want to sleep all the time. Neurasthenia is the name usually given them. Doctors who fail to take into account spiritual realities try all sorts of cures. One doctor's remedy for this was simply prolonged rest, during which his patients were not even allowed to feed themselves. Since despair usually carries a wave of self-pity along with it, it is hard to suppose he helped them.

Despair is the prevailing mood of western civilization. It is not

the sin against hope kind of despair, which directly doubts God's power to save. In America it is usually natural despair; the despair of making a million dollars, of settling in Westchester, of obtaining international peace, of finding a husband, or of advancing in the social scale, or of buying love and happiness. We brought it on ourselves by placing our hope in materialistic things. Of itself our despair has nothing to do with God, but it might lead to humility which is good ground for grace.

To commit a Crime is to kill the soul, but to despair is to fall into Hell. The truth of this old saying will be echoed by anyone who has ever tasted of despair. Despair is not just painful. It is intolerable. The antidote is hope, or anything that gives pleasure and will encourage the vital elements of the body. Warm baths, rest, wine, music, friends, all the ordinary consolations are in order. But if the despair runs deep more drastic measures are in order. Suicide is the logical conclusion of despair. Many people try to escape it via intense sense pleasures, of which sex and alcohol especially recommend themselves. Here again is a precipitating point of escape mechanisms. But in the case of despair the senses are not only an escape from it, they also precipitate you into it.

The alternative to suicide and/or madness on the one hand, and to forced revelry on the other, is hope, the only real cure for despair. If the despair is deep the hope must be strong, which is to say that it must rest in God. This is the more essential the worse the mess people are in or the more melancholic their temperament.

It can be said categorically that people of pronounced melancholic temperament will only find consolation in God and *must* therefore have a strong religious life. Otherwise they will despair and their sorrow will itself lead to madness. Involutional melancholia has always been recognized as a distinct form of insanity which tempts to suicide and is hard to cure. It is very bad for melancholic people to talk too much, and they should avoid any sort of analysis.

Opiates Are the Religion of the People

We are a nation of escapist. We run from our own despair, from the meaninglessness of our lives, from sorrow, from fear, from the spectacle of our own mediocrity.

It is on the whole a wise move. It is nature making one last effort at self-preservation. So it is wise not to remove the props, however unsteady, from under a man poised on the brink of despair, until you are prepared to support him otherwise.

Will you drown yourself in pleasure in disregard of the day of reckoning? Try sex or alcohol (not both; they are incompatible in the long run). The sins of the flesh will divert you for a while. Then what? Something may turn up to make it worth while to return to

respectability. It won't be easy to return, but it will be possible up to a point. And if not, or if I can't return? Madness. If you live long enough and drink hard enough your brain will deteriorate. Lust may get you functionally. Or it, too, may destroy your mind organically, through disease.

Perhaps it would be better just to keep too busy to think. Join committees like mad. Be an eager-beaver. Read everything. Go out every night. Never be alone. Never think a serious thought. But it's hard to keep up the pace. Something will happen that you will have to think about. Or you'll have a physical breakdown. Or more likely a nervous breakdown.



Opiates are the religion of the people.

Try oblivion if you're sure you never want to recover. It's done with drugs.

If none of the above suit you, or if they are too expensive or disgraceful, the thing for you is day-dreaming. Doesn't cost a cent. Can be done under the very noses of a vigilant family. It gets progressively more interesting. As you become more adept at it, the pain of your circumstances eases. Who cannot invent a better world than this one? Maybe you will be able to cast off from reality entirely.

What Is Reality?

Most people are living in two unreal worlds. There is the ordinary humdrum world. It would be gross flattery to call this reality. It is unredeemed. Its values are all wrong. It does not consider God. It is the secularist nightmare. In it the millionaire's palace is as fake as the slum tenement. As a matter of fact suicide comes easier amid material splendor, or on lovely sunny days. It is the contrast between one's aching heart and the riches and beauty which cannot assuage or satisfy that makes things especiall intolerable. But to get back. There are tenements. There is almost universal ugliness. There is domestic strife, stupid jobs and all the rest. Only love can make it endurable, and only God can make it really real. The facts are always

there: the irritation at the breakfast table, the fifty pounds overweight, the ten dollars a week, the spot on the carpet. But the world is a nightmare of meaninglessness without God, or without love (love is the most godlike thing among us, and whenever it reaches a selfless spiritual degree it has a power to transform things).

The other unreality is the world of the movies, the advertisements, the radio and the magazines. This is the world in which everything in the kitchen matches and everyone dresses like Hollywood stars. This is the world of tawdry glamour, of hypocrisy and pretense.

So with two unrealities already, why not a third? The advantage of the world of day-dreams is that you yourself can be the central character, a sort of composite of all ideal qualities. Day-dreaming absorbs the imagination, which should be busy supplying the intellect with data about daily life. That's why day-dreamers are abstracted. You can day-dream a lot before your imagination starts handing over day-dream world data as the real stuff. But there is abundant opportunity for practice in the ordinary life. With many girls their work is an invitation to day-dream, and their evenings are spent at the movies, gathering new material. It can be laid down as a general rule that something is always going to be going on in the brain. Where people will not think their imagination will take over.

Day-dreamers are regularly classified as schizophrenics and almost certainly given shock treatments. What is the point in forcing persons by drastic means back into a grim unreality that they have been trying to escape from all their lives?



The workingman of all his troubles,
The social-worker rids,
Freud relieves him of his soul,
And Sanger takes his kids.

PART V. THE WAY OUT

We cannot repeat it too often. The world will do anything but reform itself. We'll spend a million dollars any day rather than make a radical change in our way of living. So long as we are committed to such a philosophy, we'll assuage our consciences with superficialities in regard to mental disease. We probably feel very virtuous now that

we've lately stirred up a lot of indignation about the physical care of the spiritually tortured. But the physical structure of insane asylums is accidental to the problem of mental disease whereas the prevailing philosophy of psychiatrists is of the essence of the problem. Who has led a crusade against Freud? Who has campaigned for exorcists in asylums or for trained chaplains?

The fact that should be most obvious from this paper is that there is no hope for remedying the general condition of widespread mental breakdown without a spiritual transformation of society. If we don't reform we'll all be locked up, unless we are blown to bits first. If we keep on trying to wipe out venereal disease apart from morality, if we keep on trying to cure cancer without questioning the food industry, there just is no hope for us anyhow.

Having said that, there remains the problem of helping those who are the victims of our disordered society.

Relevance of Religion to Mental Disorders

Some indication has been given in this paper of the continual interweaving of religious considerations with those of mental health. We have barely touched on the stabilizing effect of objective "authoritarian" moral standards. We have discussed the matter of a troubled conscience and the therapeutic effects of absolution. We have mentioned the unbalancing propensities of sins of the flesh, and the mental torment of metaphysical uncertainty. For lack of space we have neglected until now any real mention of grace in this connection, although this is most important of all.

The synthesis that has to be made psychologically between religion and mental disorders centers about this question of grace, and it has not been made yet so far as we know. St. Thomas was not concerned with it, but elaborated a *rational* psychology which does not include the supernatural.

We usually think of mystical theology in connection with devout people well advanced in the spiritual life, and not in connection with neurotics and dysomaniacs. Unconsciously we assume that progress toward God lies through the acquisition of natural virtue, forgetting that supernatural life is gratuitous and forever beyond our deserts, and forgetting also that the only disposing condition is humility.

It is the dysomaniacs who have rediscovered in practice the approach to God through humility alone, although they don't know quite what to do with it. Natural despair is fertile ground for supernatural hope. Alcoholics Anonymous, who are drawn mostly from the spiritually underprivileged classes, work on this theory. They don't try the old tack of urging a drunk to make a man of himself. Instead they approach him at his humblest (just recovering from a disastrous bout)

and urge him to admit his own impotence to reform and beg God to do for him what he cannot do for himself. It works, even among people who can't seem to go on from there theologically.

Why should it work, apart from the rather vague explanation that God is good. It works because those in a state of grace can, if they will allow it, shift over from a natural to a supernatural economy of operation. The supernatural gifts and virtues operate as habits paralleling our natural psychological equipment for human operation. Take a single example. Our control of the passions is accomplished partly through the natural virtue of temperance, which is markedly absent in habitual drunks and others snowed under by the sins of the flesh. Through humble and complete abandonment one predisposes oneself for a shift to the supernatural economy where virtues, including the virtue of temperance, operate in us through no direct effort on our part. It is rather as though a man were a puppet lying twisted in a heap, who consenting to be lifted up by God, is therefore raised up and untwisted in one process. Actually supernatural grace carries natural perfection in its wake. A neurotic who was converted to the Church and started going to daily Communion would feel the sanctifying and healing effects of grace at the same time, as though he were being at once lifted up and straightened out. He would feel as though he were being drawn upward to God for a long time in a spiral motion before proceeding in a straight line.

The shift from the natural to the supernatural economy is the only way out of bad breakdowns, personal and social. It is the "reaching for the stars in order to get out of the mire" technique. To use it means to offer a neurotic not a less trying life, or a less exacting goal, but to commission him to make over the world. Neurotics need to lose themselves in a great cause and complete dependence on God. We usually preoccupy them instead with their own mediocrity.

The Practical Problem

The practical problem in relation to functional mental disorders is that of how to combine spiritual assistance and psychiatric care. There are other problems of course: problems of money, physical care, etc., but this is the broad general problem to which the others are subordinate. It has three levels, that of prevention, the level of slight disorders, and the level of insanity.

Preventative Measures

As we have said, the only generally effective preventative measure would be the spiritual transformation of society. However, there are a few specific things that might be effective within the present society. They are all spiritual things; psychiatry is not necessary on this level, although it has tried to work here. There is a lot of talk of "mental

health" measures, usually involving wholesale distribution of sex information. It is spiritual training that is needed.

Catholics would be spared many a nervous breakdown if good spiritual direction were more generally available and if confessors were trained to help penitents with problems and advance in holiness. It is shocking how many Catholics wouldn't dream of discussing with confessors problems which have considerable bearing on their spiritual life and mental health.

Non-Catholics are out on a limb completely. It is a ticklish matter, and not for us to decide, but would it be possible for priests to take over the sort of burden currently falling on Mr. Anthony? Could the Church make available, discretely, certain priests who could be consulted by anyone desiring a straight, authoritative answer to a moral problem? "Father, shall I leave my husband or shall I stay on for the sake of the children, and how shall I treat such a problem?" "Father, is it right that we do such and such in our office?" Certainty and moral encouragement would make it possible for many a person to endure heroically circumstances which would otherwise be crushing. Curiously enough, most people would accept a priest's authority without question. It might not occur to them for five or six years to join the Church whose authority they accept, but such is human nature.

On the Level of Neuroses

On this level the burden should fall mostly on the psychiatrist, as handling neurotics demands more time and patience than is ordinarily available for the priest. Yet almost none of the contemporary psychiatrists have any understanding or appreciation of religion. They tend rather to overemphasize, since they are medical doctors, the physical and physiological aspects of nervous breakdowns. We need psychiatrists with spiritual, philosophical and theological training, who have as much knowledge of the faith as they currently have of Freud, Jung and Adler; psychiatrists who can intelligently discuss the metaphysical aspects of their patients' problems and who have some ideal of a Christian norm.

Such a psychiatrist would work in harmony with a priest spiritual director in the case of his Catholic patients. With his non-Catholic patients he would not keep silent on the subject of religion, because God is not irrelevant to mental disease. That does not mean he would proselytize, but that he would explain things in the light of moral considerations, treat a guilty conscience as such, etc. Rudolf Allers said in one of his books that he knew of no cure for neurosis except sanctity or the desire for sanctity. We hold to the same general thesis. People are not seriously unbalanced by trivialities, and what is not trivial in the spiritual realm, very much involves God.

At present, in lieu of such psychiatrists, the few priests who are competent spiritual directors are carrying, often successfully, a psychiatric as well as a spiritual burden.

On the Level of Insanity

At what point does a neurosis become insanity? At the point, hard to discern exactly, at which the person loses the principle of recovery. He may be deeply melancholic while yet cherishing a ray of hope; when that is gone he is oriented to despair. A girl may day-dream a long time before stepping into the world of phantasms. When the principle of recovery is lost it is usually the person's will which breaks free of control, and with it the hope of recovery through the appeal of right reason.

Therefore the problem of the insane is partly the problem of reaching them (whereas with neurotics it is more a problem of gaining their cooperation). Here grace should be invaluable. We would even venture the hypothesis that a mentally deranged person is more sensitive to supernatural influence than a normal person and would respond in time to great supernatural charity on the part of an attendant when nothing else could touch him. This is in line with a general principle, which is true, that the worse our plight the more we need God.

In relation to the practical problem, the integration of psychiatric and spiritual treatment, it would be wonderful if they could be combined in holy nurses. But we mean more than that. We mean to suggest possibly even an order of psychiatrist-priests who might even also do nursing work. The idea seems foreign to our modern ears, but it is not without precedence in the Church.

The Catholic Duty

It is really rather shocking that Catholics have so far neglected the great work of mercy in our day. There are only a handful of Catholic asylums in the whole country and most of these are to care for religious. There is no general sense of duty toward non-Catholics who have had

ODE TO A PSYCHIATRIST

Come to me all men with fears,
And I will give thee solace,
I'll bring thee peace of mind, my dears,
For just a thousand dollars.



mental breakdowns. There has practically been no opposition to the prevailing philosophies. We have chaplains in public institutions but no special training is afforded them.

It isn't necessarily a question of money. Catholics would have no difficulty nursing the insane in public institutions, state hospitals and the like. They probably could do it in a body, taking over whole sections and instituting their own methods, subject to state supervision. This is one field in which there would probably be only gratitude. There would be opposition from the Freudian doctors who are now largely in control, but who are not as well-intrenched or as highly thought of as they might wish.

There is probably no harder work than the care of the insane. It is much too much for most people. Those who did the work would have to be very holy indeed. It is useful to remember that one reason God allows terrible things to happen to some is so that the rest of us can exercise charity toward them.

by PETER MICHAELS
illustrated by
ED WILLOCK



BOOK REVIEWS

Food for the Mind As Prescribed By Its Maker

THEOLOGY AND SANITY.

By F. J. Sheed.

New York: Sheed & Ward, 1946.

Price: \$3.00.

The usual tone of a book review is that of one standing in judgment upon the author. I have been saved the necessity of complying with this custom by the simple fact that Mr. Sheed knows more than I do. My position has both its advantages and its disadvantages. It is an advantage because it is to such as me that the book has been dedicated. It says so in the Foreword: "I played with the thought of dedicating this book To All Who Know Less Theology Than I." Which puts me in a favorable position to express my gratitude. The disadvantage is that my review will not do the book justice. No doubt it is much better than I think it is and I think it is excellent.

Theology and Sanity is not light reading: it is Light reading. It represents the donation by a lay-theologian of that one gift indispensable to a world on the edge of nothingness—the gift of God-knowledge, as the scholars name it—Theology. Implicit in it is the invitation extended to those who would know man, to drop their mirrors and look to God.

I like the way that Mr. Sheed writes. He paints without splashing. He handles feathers and paste without ever getting his fingers sticky. He says things like this: "To overlook God's presence is not simply to be irreligious; it is a kind of insanity like overlooking anything else that is actually there."

The weight of the material may be surmised by the division headings. The major divisions are: *God, Creation and Oneself*. The subdivisions under *Creation* are: *The created Universe, God as Creator, Angels, Matter, Men, The Testing of Angels and men*, and so on.

For those who lack formal training in Theology and who hunger for it, this is a generous portion. Aside from the excellence of the book, two questions are posed whenever such a volume appears:

- 1) Will those who need it read it?
- 2) Will those who read it relate it significantly with life?

Mr. Sheed in his Preliminary anticipates the first problem. Here are a few things he says about it:

For the souls full functioning, we need a Catholic intellect as well as a Catholic will. We have a Catholic will when we love God and obey God, love the Church and obey the Church. We have a Catholic intellect when we live consciously in the presence of the realities that God through His Church has revealed. A good working test of a Catholic will is that we should do what the Church says. But for a Catholic intellect, we must also see what the Church sees.

As for the second problem: will those who read this book know how to relate the sanity thus acquired to the current insanity called practical matters? (Not that this is the use to which Theology primarily should be put, for seeing God is an end in itself. To live our Faith, however, this relationship must be determined.) This still remains an unsolved problem. All of the sciences are yet to be resolved as true subordinates of Theology. Sociology in practice remains completely ignorant of theological truths, while contradicting it at every step. As a consequence of this ignorance, the average reader of *Theology and Sanity* will do no more than contrast the sanity of theology with that other sanity known as practical matters. He will be unable to make a synthesis, and let it go at that. The first need is for scholarship, and it can begin anywhere between the *Summa Theologica* and the daily newspaper. A list of text-books from Psychiatry to Metallurgy, or from Art to Ship-rigging would fail to reveal one that gives anything but a passing glance to the sanity of Theology. Here is a job for Catholic Actionists. Here is something for Joe College who doesn't know what to do with his life. The sanity of seeing things as the Church of God sees them, has to be breathed into every text-book, every film, every newspaper, every periodical and every radio script in the land. And this doesn't mean editing, or censoring, but complete re-writing. There is a very good chance that we will have to tip the world up-side-down to do it, but after all that is what we are here to do.

E.W.

Forerunner of the Red Cross

LIFE OF ST. CAMILLUS.

By C. C. Martindale, S.J.

New York: Sheed & Ward.

Price: \$2.50.

We are overdue for a spiritual reform in nursing, so a life of the patron saint of nurses is of more than academic interest.

St. Camillus de Lellis, lived in the last half of the sixteenth century. He was a giant (6½ feet tall), a gambler in his youth, who suffered all his adult life from a painful, festered, leg wound which evidently was God's way of directing him to his vocation. Camillus founded a religious order, some of whose members, including himself, were priests, to care for the sick. The hospitals of the period, though of excellent design, had little to recommend them as to nursing care and had appalling mortality rates, even during plague-free intervals.

Camillus' history is well authenticated. Father Martindale does a conscientious job of weighing, sorting, and cutting the material. I wish he had spared the readers less in the matter of gory details. To see Christ in the sick, on which Camillus always insisted, is hard, especially

if the sickness is disgusting. Some gory examples would be edifying, if only to reassure an age that is losing heart (or stomach) that it can be done. I wish, too, that the author had elaborated more some of his comparisons between Camillus' ideals and present day practice, or even present-day ideals, which are sterile (in both senses). The saint wanted his men to take over all the nursing and menial work of the hospitals (they were forbidden by him to do administrative work or to criticize the bad administration of others), an ideal in direct contrast to our prevalent disdain of the bedside aspects of nursing in favor of supervisory work. The saint's life reminds us that nursing is not a female reserve. Also that the Church has a tradition of battle-field care. The Order of Ministers of the Sick, which is Camillus' order and which still exists, uses a red cross to distinguish its habit. Fr. Martindale clears up the matter of the present-day Red Cross. Does its cross have religious significance? No. The organization has publicly repudiated the idea. Its spirit was merely humanitarian from the beginning. E.J.

Sacerdotium, Imperium et Studium

DANTE ALIGHIERI

Citizen of Christendom

By Gerald G. Walsh, S.J.

Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company. 1946.

Price: \$3.00.

The Cross, the Eagle and the Lyre — these were the symbols of the Church, the Empire and the Liberal Arts in the

age that saw the birth of an unique Florentine poet, Dante Alighieri. Nevertheless, before this same poet should put down his pen, close his books and breathe his last, these symbols were to give way to those of secularism, nationalism and nominalism. In *"Dante Alighieri Citizen of Christendom"* Father Walsh has given us a picture of this transitional age, bridging the chasm between the ancient and the modern worlds. As the author has pointed out, Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374), a man of the heart torn by inner conflicts, is the "first modern man," whereas St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), a man of intellect, may well be considered the last of the ancients. Petrarca loved learning, art and language in preference to philosophy, logic and theology, but Dante loved both the "ancient" and the "modern" disciplines. He loved his native land but, at the same time, saw the need for a world empire—or as we say "one world." He loved language, art and learning which were destined to become the passion of the Renaissance, but he also thought as an ancient; that is to say he put the "rule of reason" first with its emphasis on first principles which, to a man of the thirteenth century, ultimately rested on the dogma of Faith.

Father Walsh has made a contribution to the vast literature on

Dante by depicting our poet to be still a man of the Middle Ages while yet a man of the Renaissance. In Dante's "*Vita Nuova*," a work embodying the neo-platonic dialects of love, in his "*De Vulgari Eloquentia*," a treatise on the art of writing, and in his "*De Monarchia*," a political treatise, we foresee the preoccupations of the Renaissance Man, but it is to the "*Convivio*" and especially to the "*Divina Commedia*" that we must turn if we wish to see the two cultures converging, the theology and philosophy of the medieval tradition combined with Dante's unique humanism, that humanism which was to undergo a substantial alteration in subsequent years. Truly it may be said that the works of Dante Alighieri—and in particular the "*Divina Commedia*"—are monuments to the "*Sacerdotium*," "*Imperium*" and the "*Stadium*."

Dr. Walsh' book will be of real service to students of Dante as it furnishes a vast amount of historical detail that illumines that whole period composing the latter part of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century, that period which we arbitrarily call the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance. His book will also be of value to the novice, for the poetry of Dante cannot be studied without considerable extraneous help. And this book will serve just such a purpose, particularly as it is written in a very readable and non-technical style.

R.W.

Trial By Fire

SAINT CATHERINE OF GENOA
The Treatise on Purgatory and
The Dialogue

Translated by Charlotte Balfour
and Helen Douglas Irvine
New York: Sheed & Ward. 1946.
Price: \$2.00.

If you wish to spend a few hours in another world, read St. Catherine of Genoa's fascinating "Treatise on Purgatory." This is the right kind of escape reading. It will add another dimension to your spiritual landscape. Never has the

stripping of a soul carried out of itself, purged and centered on God, been so vividly described. Some of the purest doctrine of St. John of the Cross is contained here in the plainest and simplest language. The obscurities of "the dark night" baffle some souls. Here there is no such excuse. It is embarrassingly pointed and calculated to upset the spiritually complacent. It prompts not argument as to its interpretation so much as a re-examination of conscience. That it is better to suffer for a thousand years here than one hour in purgatory stops one up short. It should set the slothful to act and the spiritually ambitious on the road to perfection.

The accompanying dialogue written by the saint's god-daughter, Battista Vernazza, is the spiritual biography of Catherine written in allegorical form as a series of debates between the body, the soul and self-love and the natural man and the Lord. It is naive in form and devastating in content.

S.T

Caritas Incorporated

FRIENDSHIP HOUSE

By Catherine de Hueck

New York: Sheed & Ward. 1946.

Price: \$2.00.

One of the most significant chapters in the history of the Church in America is recounted here simply and eloquently, with an engaging dash of journalese. Catherine de Hueck's graphic, liquid, colorful prose, so unlabored and direct, enlivens everything she handles. This story of Friendship House moves along swiftly and easily, buoyed by its foundress' realistic-but-romantic outlook and her indefatigable zeal. The Baroness can be a gripping speaker but writing is her better gift. Utter reliance on the Holy Ghost coupled with her keen emotions makes for a freshness and a sweep, a vigor and a charm which is enchanting. "Of such is the Kingdom." It is heartening to realize that another woman of marked literary gifts and executive genius is devoting her talents not to Gimbel's but to God.

The first part of the book describes the development of her apostolate from its inception in Toronto to Harlem and Chicago. The second part is a throwback to the reflections of the Baroness in her earlier days as a young refugee working in a laundry near Fourteenth Street. There is a sober and brilliant discussion of the reasons for the growth of communism, the communist technique and its Catholic counterpart which everyone should read. Due credit to co-workers is gracefully given throughout and cross-fertilization of ideas from contact with other lay apostolic groups is healthfully evident.

Poverty—"not being possessed by possessions"—, hard work, discipline, and, above all, recognition of the *primaute du spirituel*, characterize "Friendship House." If its leaders don't have a clear notion of the doctrine of the Mystical Body, nobody has. For a group so saturated with the supernatural spirit, "Friendship House" is understatement indeed. Caritas Incorporated might be misunderstood but it certainly would be appropriate.

For a literary treat and a tonic against tepidity read "Friendship House." Our only regret is that it is more of a series of swift camera shots than a detailed study.

S.T.

BOOKS RECEIVED

UNDER THE RED SUN, by Forbes Monaghan, S.J. Declan X. McMullen, \$2.75. A story of Filipino life under the Japanese occupation.

HEART AFIRE, by Rev. M. D. Forrest, M.S.C. Sentinal Press, \$1.50. On Devotion to the Sacred Heart.

IN HIM WAS LIFE, by John P. Delaney, S.J. America Press, \$2.75. Homilies on Introits of the Mass.

**THOU HAST MADE US FOR
THYSELF, O LORD, AND OUR
HEARTS ARE RESTLESS TILL
THEY REST IN THEE.**

